

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 18 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (twice amended). A method for automatically managing energy cost using metering data

and pricing data, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving metering data from a utility meter, wherein the metering data is

electronically transmitted from the utility meter;

receiving pricing data electronically over a network, wherein the pricing data

is associated with a plurality of sources of power;

forecasting a forecast load based on the received metering data from the utility

meter; and

determining an optimal consumption decision based on the received pricing

data and the forecast load, wherein the consumption decision

selects one of the plurality of sources of power to thereby

reduce utility costs.

21 (amended). The method of claim 1, further including automatically implementing the

optimal consumption decision, wherein the automatically implementing includes

automatically providing power from [one or more] at least one of the plurality of

sources of power to the customer based upon the optimal consumption decision.

22 (amended). A system for automatically managing energy cost [using metering data and

pricing data], the system comprising:

a server communicating with at least one utility meter, wherein said server is configured to record [for recording and transmitting the] metering data received from said utility meter via a network;

5

[at least one server; and

a network,] and wherein the [at least one] server is further configured [to receive the metering data from the at least one utility meter,] to receive [the] pricing data from each of a plurality of sources of power from the network, and to determine an optimal consumption decision [and to transmit the optimal consumption decision to a customer], wherein the optimal consumption decision selects one of the plurality of sources of power to thereby reduce utility costs.

10

27 (amended). The system of claim 22, wherein the [at least one] server comprises [at least one]a central server and [at least one] a regional server.

28 (amended). The system of claim 27, wherein the [at least one] central server is configured to receive the pricing data from the network, to receive the metering data from the [at least one] regional server, to determine the optimal consumption decision and to transmit the optimal consumption decision to the at least one regional server.

29 (amended). The system of claim 27, wherein the [at least one] regional server is configured to receive the metering data from the [at least one] utility meter, to transmit the metering data to the [at least one] central server, to receive the optimal